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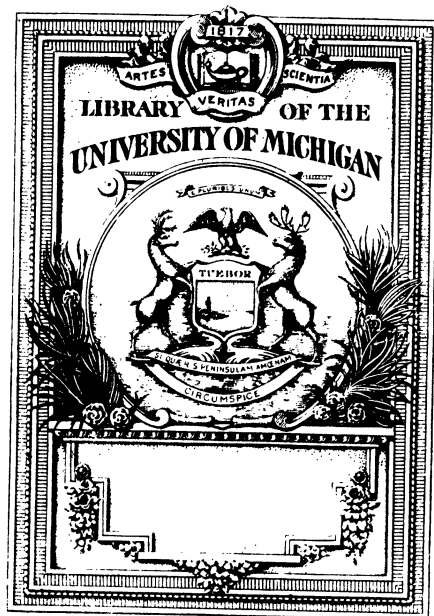
American Academy
of
Political and Social
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ANNALS

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ANNALS
OF THE
AMERICAN ACADEMY
OF 102450
POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

ISSUED BI-MONTHLY.

VOL. XVI.
JULY, 1900—DECEMBER, 1900.

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PHILADELPHIA :
AMERICAN ACADEMY OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCE.
1900.

THE ETHICAL AND POLITICAL PRINCIPLES OF "EXPANSION."

The acquisition without the expressed consent of its inhabitants of a thickly settled island like Porto Rico, enjoying civilized institutions, though inhabited by a partially civilized population, and the retention by force of arms of the national power and authority over the Philippine archipelago, where sovereignty had been legally acquired by treaty, has brought the United States into the world current of colonial expansion. While there is no difference in international law between the position of the United States in Porto Rico or in Alaska, or between the suppression of the resistance of the Sioux Indian tribes, in the Louisiana purchase or the resistance of the Tagals in the Philippine purchase, the difference of degree between the situation in each case has forcibly brought before the minds of men a reconsideration of the entire subject of the rights and the relations between civilized and partially civilized communities. By none is the necessity for an impartial consideration of the ethical relation of these acts felt more strongly than by those desirous that the acts of the nation, for which they feel "as a lover or a child," shall not only be right, but seem right. The United States has for a century advanced, under various treaties conferring international but not therefore necessarily moral rights, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, imposing its sovereignty, administrative authority and law, sometimes with and sometimes without citizenship, over civilized, semi-civilized and savage communities already in possession of the soil, without their expressed consent and sometimes against their violent resistance. It is continuing this policy on lands beyond the seas, whose territory it can never hope to fill with its own population, as was indeed asserted to be the case with earlier acquisitions. Are these twin advances, their march first across the continent, and next on

island realms, part of the same movement? Can either or both be justified in the forum of morals and of political principle?

The form of government, the limits of government and the just territorial extent of government must long remain subjects of a constant discussion. Where a century ago representative government through a popular Assembly instead of through a single head was in theory accepted as the best in form, the parliamentary experience of the past half-century has profoundly modified this political tenet. Where the limits of government were believed, a half-century ago, to be best defined in theory upon the principle of *laissez faire*, municipal legislation, and at some points international law, has, during the last half-century, accepted the task of a supervision which would once have seemed a retrogression to medieval practice or an advance towards socialist principles. Lastly, the just territorial extent of government was, in the period which began with the Declaration of Independence, 1776, in theory believed to be authoritatively dependent upon the consent, tacit or expressed, of a majority of the population occupying the governed territory. While this principle had numerous infractions in the name of order, dynastic privilege and of sheer territorial appetite, even these were asserted as exceptions to a general rule which seemed, as Thomas Jefferson said, "truths self-evident." Yet, even this principle, which once seemed so simple of application, was crossed in practice before a century had passed over in the country where it was first enunciated by a terrible and devastating war, which denied the right of self-selection in government to the white population of the seceding states of the American Union.

The theories which were asserted by the encyclopedists for the eighteenth century, the principle and practice which were unhesitatingly erected upon these theories during the larger part of the nineteenth century, have, as will be seen, in regard to all three of these issues, the form, the limits,

and the just territorial extent of government, been thrown into the alembic of discussion. Step by step every civilized country has been drawn during the last twenty-five years into action which runs directly counter to the American and to the main theoretical assertion of the previous one hundred years, that the first authority which should be consulted, in determining the administrative and national relations of any territory, should be those who live within this territory. There is to-day no more vexed ethical problem than that which turns upon this issue, whose decision must establish the ethical acquittal or the ethical condemnation of the acts by which the colonial possessions of European states have been increased during the last quarter of a century by some eight million square miles, a policy in which the United States has begun to share and on which every American is forced to reach a sober, a careful and a responsible decision.

Fortunately, in the maze and flux of conflicting commercial interests, territorial ambition and national Chauvinism, there are certain fundamental principles upon which all are still agreed. These are held by all parties to this discussion and by all the actors in the great drama, which is so rapidly parcelling the earth's surface among the "great powers." All of these powers but one hold the theory of self-government, and all, without exception, even Russia, admit the principle of self-government as on the whole the wisest, though not at all times the best, most practicable of plans for the government of men. Two principles are the admitted object of all society : First, the creation of the best possible environment for the development of the free, intelligent, moral being, capable of a wise choice and ethically desiring to use this choice to the general good in the service of other human beings. This because to the general effort of other human beings in the past, continued during the centuries, the individual is in debt by an unearned increment greater than can be discharged by a life-time of self-sacrificing devotion.

Second, the best ultimate environment for the development of such an individual is as universally accepted to be the self-governing state, in which the will of the individual is periodically exerted to decide according to settled, fundamental and agreed laws, the legislative, executive and judicial action of the community of which he is a part, in all its decisions, local, mesne and national. From Russia upwards, every official public utterance accepts the view that the utmost freedom of self-government in local affairs, in those middle organizations, the state and country in American practice, the shire in English, the department in France, should be granted as is consonant with the maintenance of order, the stability of the state, and the rights of ruler and ruled, construed with reference to the safety, the prosperity, and the development of the community as a whole. To-day if arbitrary power is exerted anywhere, it is on the avowed excuse that it is necessary in view of the imperfect development of the society, and its necessity is best established by piously asserting that its despotism is a providential instrument, ordained of heaven for the purpose of controlling the folly, the wickedness and the ignorance of men not yet ready for complete self-government.

These two principles, the self-ruling individual and the self-governing community, are now accepted as the theoretical rule of practice by which the organization of the state must be judged. Under despotisms, or under what are called liberal institutions, the ethics of each political act are all to-day brought to the bar of a common consciousness before which each act must be judged according as it facilitates and promotes, or hinders and retards the ultimate creation of a self-governing environment for the self-controlling individual. But in applying this principle, so broad in its application, so universal in its acceptance, there instantly appear sundry limits which the experience of man has established upon the exercise of self-rule by the individuals of a community. The first of these limits is that of age. When

we speak of universal suffrage, we exclude by common consent all those whose development has not reached the years at which an adult will exist. For different purposes this age limit may be drawn at different years. With us, certain contracts can only be made after eighteen. The political right of suffrage can only be exercised after twenty-one. A man is only eligible for the federal Senate after the age of thirty, and for the supreme gift of the Presidency a limit of thirty-five years of age has been established. Without question, the privilege of self-government is here limited sharply by an arbitrary line, which in some individuals comes too late, and in some too early to agree precisely with the individual development, but which is imposed by the community for the general good. Sex is another limitation on political self-rule. In most communities, though by no means in all, suffrage is limited to men, and whether this step be wise or unwise, the right to make some limitation is accepted by all. Character is still another limitation on the right of self-government. All are agreed that an infamous conviction is sufficient cause for depriving a man of his share in the rights of self-government. Intelligence is another limitation. The idiot and the insane, by general consent, are excluded. Experience has rendered it true that it is also wise to have an educational qualification, and the possession of special educational powers, as a university degree, has, in a number of countries, been held to confer special political privilege. Lastly, in a large number of countries, this limit upon the exercise of self-government by the individual is extended by means of special qualifications, of property, of residence for a term from thirty days up in North American states or of registration. All, then, accept the view that the best self-governing environment is secured for all individuals by excluding some from the privilege of sharing in self-rule. These limits are drawn at different points. They are drawn everywhere for age, nearly everywhere for sex; they are imposed with varying force for character, but the

necessity of some limit to the right of the individual to share in the self-government of the community of which he is a part is so self-evident that it has ceased to be a subject of discussion as a principle, and become instead simply an issue as to its various applications.

These limitations as to the privilege of the individual exist also with reference to the right of the individuals in a particular territory, as related to all the individuals in a larger territorial community of which the smaller territorial section constitutes a part. It is perfectly clear that if the inhabitants living at the mouth of the Mississippi were to determine that their own prosperity and development required a separate national government, that the greater good of all the inhabitants in the entire Mississippi basin would give them a right as a whole to decide, not that the inhabitants at the mouth of the river should be deprived of all self-government, but that self-government should be exercised as a part of the larger territorial unit, created by the basin of the Mississippi, all whose parts are equally interested in the freedom of the self-government and mutual action of each of its parts. Twice in our history, once when the Franco-Spanish population of New Orleans desired control; and again, during the Civil War, the right of the entire Mississippi valley to see to it, to use Abraham Lincoln's phrase, "that the father of waters should run unvexed to the sea," was unhesitatingly exercised. The same principle applies to territorial boundaries, some historic in their origin, but nearly all based on physiographic conditions. It would be a wrong, both for the county of Kent and for the island of Great Britain, if the inhabitants of Kent were again to assert the right of self-government alone and apart, which was once indubitably theirs as a Saxon kingdom. Physiographic reasons, therefore, sometimes clear, sometimes dubious, and sometimes finding their chief justification in previous historic conditions, determine certain national boundaries within which we are all agreed that the greatest

good of the greatest number—and by the greatest number is meant not those merely who are living at one particular time, but all who are to be influenced in the future—requires the primary rule of self-government by a particular territory to be exercised, subject to the larger rights of the larger territory, of which it is a homogeneous part, racially, geographically or historically, the extent to which these boundary-making facts shall modify self-rule for an individual or a community being accepted as a question of application and not of principle.

Within these territorial limits, thus established, there are further facts which limit the self-action of the individual and the self-government of the community. Exactly as our sanitary laws prohibit any individual from maintaining a nuisance, from using appliances dangerous to the health of others, or from leaving the community without knowledge of a contagious case in his own family, so the nation as a whole rightly, that is morally and by just political principle, exercises its control over the self-government of the local community to require a certain level of morals, of education, of institutions and of administration to be preserved. The guarantee of a Republican form of government to each state is one shape in which this interference is exercised in the Union. Our Civil War was the assertion, among other issues, of the right on the part of 18,000,000 of our white population to forbid 8,000,000 from continuing the institution of domestic slavery. A small, insignificant minority in Utah has, under the same principle, been coerced into abandoning polygamy. These infractions of the right of self-choice by the individual, and of self-government by the community, are each justified and only justified on the general principle which justifies also the exclusion from self-government of individuals below nonage, the determination and maintenance of national boundaries upon rights partly historical and partly physiographic, and the entire series of limitations on the action of the individual, by local self-gov-

ernment, by the larger self-governing organism of the state, and finally by the nation. The creation of the environment of self-government for the development of the self-controlling individual is, therefore, by no means the direct, simple and exceptionless act which it appeared to the political thinkers of the eighteenth century. The various "inalienable rights" which make up this complex and self-governing state, made up of self-controlled individuals, is only reached through a large number of limitations, which exclude various classes of individuals, various categories of territory, and various desires of men, from the privilege of self-determination and self-wish.

These twin ideas of self-control for the individual and self-rule for the state, now accepted as settled, final principles all over the world, are the established practice only in the greater part of the temperate zone. In this continent, the principle and practice of self-government are in existence north of the sub-tropical regions. Temperate Europe is all dedicated to self-rule, and while Russia still has in its general government a despotism, autocratic and personal, the Russian mir constitutes, perhaps, the most complete instance of local individual self-government known the world over. Despotism as China is, its local village organization has at many points nearly as large a share of self-rule as that of Russia, and Japan may be unhesitatingly added to the countries in which self-rule exists. If we begin in the south temperate zone with New Zealand, we find ourselves in a land where the principles of general self-rule not only over political action and development, but over property rights and industrial operations, have been carried farther than in any other country, and with results which emphasize the value of the extension of this privilege from political to property rights. Australia, less advanced, is now engaged in extending the principle of self-rule from separate colonies to a federated commonwealth. Chili and Argentina, in South America, have come closer to establishing self-government

than any other countries in that continent. The present war in South Africa, whose results may any week be complete, is itself an illustration of the mutual acceptance in theory of the principle of self-rule by both combatants, and of the inevitable conflict, which has already been touched upon, between the rights of the small, integral community exclusively to rule itself and the rights on the other hand, first, of men to go where they will and in all lands enjoy all the political privileges of self-rule ; and, second, of the claims of the larger territorial unit of which the small state is a part to control the latter. For there is no reasonable doubt that a century hence the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony will have become part of a South African domain, whose common fellow-citizens will look upon the present war as do the citizens of our Union on our Civil War, as an issue on which men could honestly differ, but on which all men can gladly and loyally accept the final result.

Between this belt of self-governing countries, broken in the north temperate zone by China and Russia, and unbroken in the south temperate zone, there stretches the tropics, to-day and from the beginnings of history without self-government or local self-rule. The problem, therefore, as in the temperate zone, is the creation in these tropical countries of the same environment of the self-governing community for the best development of the self-controlled individual. There are two diametrically opposite views in regard to the best course which should be followed in order to create such communities in the tropics, which include to-day nearly half the human race. The first view stands still upon that general principle of absolute right, individual development and *laissez faire*, which was the basis of early assertion and assumption a century and a half ago in regard to the forms, the limits, and the just extent of territorial administration. The double claim is asserted, first, that the development of the temperate zone has taken place best without external interference, so that the best development of

the tropics is likely to come about in the same way ; and, second, that each region has a right to such institutions, such government and such development as it prefers. We have no ethical right, such men say, to force what we are pleased to call a higher civilization or a more advanced administration upon others. If they prefer their tribal organization, their simpler institutions, their ruder adjustment of personal and political, civil and administrative rights, it is for them and not for us to decide whether it is better to live in a medieval or in a modern state, in a savage or a civilized community.

With the just and prompt interference of legislation and administration, with like claims in the case of individuals who prefer a savage, predatory or socially backward life, we are familiar. We are less familiar with similar interference with communities in behalf of the general development of the race. Yet the two acts rest on the same basis, are physically on a par, and are both only justifiable on the same ground—the final development in any region of the best conditions and environments for the self-controlled individual. Exactly as we have come to understand that the right of the individual to share in the self-government of a community of which he is a part, is or may be dependent upon age, sex, character, property, education, so the right of any region to self-government is not inherent, but is in its turn dependent upon its relation to the general advance and development of the world.

The presumption is in favor of the right of the individual to share in the self-government of his community. The presumption is in favor of the independence and self-government of every community. But in both cases an appeal to past experience and existing fact must decide whether either the individual or the community has a right to the privilege which each asks. When communities were isolated, came in infrequent contact, and were able to develop alone, a condition which disappeared with the in-

vention of steam, the presumption in favor of the individual development, independence and self-rule of each community was far stronger than it is to-day. Nearly every argument which urges the right of the community to self-government cites authorities and utterances prior to present conditions, exactly as all like pleas for suffrage, unlimited by mental, moral or material qualifications, base themselves on assertions and utterances before the experience in universal suffrage, so-called, during the last century.

The broad fact exists that in the north and south temperate zones there has been a steady gravitation which has created a group of great powers, all but one self-governing, and that one enjoying local self-government, and justifying despotism only as a necessary step in the development of a backward state. These countries face tropical regions, part of which has been annexed, and part of which awaits an inevitable annexation. The historical progress and cause of this annexation are themselves the best possible statement of the ethical conditions which surround the colonial policy of the past quarter of a century.

1. Precisely as every nation has found it necessary by factory laws, by sanitary regulation, by the entire network and web of what is known as the police power, to maintain a uniform level among its citizens, so civilized nations have found it necessary to maintain a uniform level for the purposes of trade, communication and the free diffusion of moral and religious ideas. It has ceased to be possible to permit the trader to go and come, relying for his safety on his own efforts. Such a course leads straight towards legal piracy in some form. No nation can be allowed to exclude the moral ideas common to humanity, hence the provision in the treaties of the past century for the free passage and the protection of the missionary. No nation can be allowed to preserve on the frontiers of another nation an order of semi-savagery, of oppression, or of smoldering insurrection which affects the peace, prosperity and development of its neighbor.

In 1877, when Mexico was weak, our troops unhesitatingly pursued Indian tribes across the frontier. In 1898, when Spain was weak, we ended smoldering insurrection in Cuba by intervention. First marines and then an army have been landed in China in order to protect the legations at Peking, and this physical force is only a symbol of the steps constantly being taken by civilized nations to protect their citizens on semi-civilized territory. Ex-territoriality, with all its cumbrous fictions and its grievous injustice to the native trader, whose contracts and property are enforced and protected in courts less honest and less efficient, is a vain attempt to give under bad government, through exotic consular courts, the protection for life, for property, and for contracts which exists under good governments. These various expedients have been tried over a century, and they have all failed. They have aggravated the evils they sought to cure, and they have created evils which they could not remedy. The maintenance of a uniform level for the protection of the ordinary rights of men and women has become impossible in all that broad region which consists of semi-civilized nations, lying in the tropics, or in sub-tropical regions, except through colonial annexation.

2. It is a maxim of municipal law that the use of natural agencies is subject to the regulation of the sovereign. No man can block the best route for a railroad; no man because he owns both banks of a navigable river can close it; no man can do as he will with property like the Yellowstone Park or the Sequoia Groves in California which Congress has now before it a measure to expropriate. Every one admits that within certain limits taxation should force the development of the natural resources and riches of a community by taxing not the present but possible value of a city lot or a coal mine. It is a matter of argument whether this taxation of private right should go to the extent of absorbing all the rent or only enough of it in order to stimulate

private enterprise, but there is no possible question on the part of any one as to the moral right or the material wisdom of the use of the mingled powers of eminent domain and taxation in order to insure the efficient use of all natural agencies for the general prosperity. This applies equally to the surface of the earth. No tribe, no people, and no nation has a moral or political right, simply because it is in possession, to hold any given tract containing great natural advantages under a poor government which prevents its development, if there is a loss on this account to humanity as a whole.

3. But with reference both to the maintenance of uniform conditions in public order and the efficient use of natural agencies, the argument is always pertinent that a development from within is wiser, healthier and likely to be more permanent than any force applied from without. This argument was strong as long as nations lived isolated and separate. Free modern communication has applied an economic destruction and devastation to the development of semi-civilized countries more destructive than that of war. The steady smash of the economic systems of Turkey, Persia, and China, of all North Africa, of the Spanish colonies once held by Spain in the East and the West, and of Spanish-American countries outside of the temperate zone, has been the result of the economic principle that the worker under a bad government has no chance and no hope in competing with the worker under a good government. All nations have been bad at some time, and the worst government has always the possibility of recuperation, as history abundantly shows, but this is only possible when a country is a self-centered organism whose industries and economic exchanges go on without serious competition by an industrial system worked under more advantageous conditions. This competition has destroyed the industry, disorganized the trade, and sapped the social structure of every semi-civilized land. Japan is a solitary exception, and Japan is an exception simply and

solely because the Island Empire was equal to self-government and self-rule. What has happened elsewhere is the gradual destruction of local hand industries by the competition of factory products, whose production in a semi-civilized or badly governed country is impossible because the factory requires security for credit, for contracts and for wages. Unless these exist, it cannot come. The only two Asiatic countries which are developing factories are Japan and India under good governments. Thus it comes about that the tea of well-governed Ceylon and Assam destroys the tea industry of ill-governed China. The beet-root sugar of well-governed Germany brings to ruin and rebellion the sugar plantations of ill-governed Cuba. The jute of Southern India saps the profits of the jute plantations of Luzon. Even the marginal difference between the efficiency of the colonial administration of Holland and of Spain creates in Sumatra tobacco plantations which are destructive to the tobacco plantations of the Philippines. Administrative advance rests on prosperity. Prosperity rests on industrial efficiency. The economic competition of industries under good government, whose products under modern conditions pass constantly into competition in their own home with the products of industries under bad governments, destroys the possibility of industrial efficiency. This destroys prosperity. Administrative advance cannot come in lands cursed by economic declension.

Under these conditions there remain only three alternatives: (1) Those countries which have been outstripped in the race will sink into a lower and lower state of disorganization and disorder. (2) They will be taken up and exploited by great commercial companies, which will rule them through corrupt governments. (3) They will be acquired by self-ruling nations and embarked on a course of improvement. The last two are most certain. Disorganization and disorder will not be long permitted in a world grown as small as ours. The trader will always be strong

enough to rule for himself when he is not ruled by his own government. The choice in India was not one between native and English supremacy. It was a choice between English supremacy, exercised through a commercial corporation, or through a responsible government elected by a free people. This choice is one which exists the world over, and is already coming to be a grave question in the regions to the south of the United States. Witness the extension of corporate power in San Domingo, Honduras and elsewhere.

There remains the final question whether this process of annexation has gone far enough to determine its fruits, and results. The object is, let us remember, the creation of self-governing communities. The history of India we know for 5,000 years. It has never had self-government. It has gone on from one welter of oriental despotism to another. Through all those fifty centuries it has known good rulers and good judges, but it has never known a pure judiciary or an executive of integrity. It was without self-government or self-rule, until it was introduced by England. To-day, in its three largest cities, two-thirds of its city councils are elected by rate-payers; in over 200 cities with a population of 13,500,000, out of 9,000 counselors, 5,000 are elected, and two-thirds of this rural population, or 190,000,000, have, out of 15,000 village counselors, 5,000 who are elected by the rate-payer. In the one place, where the experiment has been tried on a great scale of ruling a tropical and sub-tropical region through the responsible government of a civilized and self-governing state, the fruits of the experiment in self-rule, in universities, in schools, in peace, in order, in prosperity, all unite to give experimental proof of the wisdom of the step which has been taken. The decision to be reached in all cases as to the responsibility of a particular country is exactly similar to the decision which must be reached as to the just limits of territorial jurisdiction in all cases. A mingling of historic, racial and physiographic

conditions decides where boundaries run, and what is treason on one side of an imaginary line becomes loyalty on the other. But when, by international law, by war, or by changes both make, these responsibilities come, they must be met. No wise man hunts responsibility; no good man shuns it. When any nation finds itself, as the United States did, with responsibility for sub-tropical regions, which the experience of the past and the conditions of the present show to be incapable of creating either self-government or public order, the duty of the hour is to accept the burden and the responsibility for creating that one environment of self-government which, as we began by saying, is the best environment for the self-controlled individual. The issue at this point is not, therefore, one of inalienable right to self-government, or to be settled by a fervid appeal to the principle of the "consent of the governed," but one of fact as to whether, at a given place and date, the conditions existed for self-government as a reasonable and present possibility.

Nor is it an answer to these mingled lessons of history, and of science, in the absence of this reasonable and present possibility, to reply that there is always hope for every human being, that each may at any time reform and return. The message of hope which was spoken both in the Sermon on the Mount and from Calvary was one which accepted the condition of inexorable law, which reminds us that "whatsoever a man soweth, that also shall he reap," and that the Caesar of worldly order has a claim as inexorable and as just, as the Divine love. To each tribute is due, to neither can it be refused. The one opportunity of securing the privilege of self-government in the future for all regions incapable of self-government to-day is to entrust their affairs for a season to the tutelage and direction of responsible, self-governing nations.

TALCOTT WILLIAMS.

Philadelphia.

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